

VZCZCXRO3506
PP RUEHBC RUEHDBU RUEHDE RUEHDIR RUEHKUK
DE RUEHYE #0902 1971127
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 161127Z JUL 07
FM AMEMBASSY YEREVAN
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5962
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUCNIRA/IRAN COLLECTIVE
RUEHGB/AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD 0022
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 0130
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0114

C O N F I D E N T I A L YEREVAN 000902

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

FOR PRM, EUR/CARC

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/15/2017
TAGS: [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [SMIG](#) [EAID](#) [AM](#) [IZ](#) [XF](#)
SUBJECT: MFA ENGAGED ON POSSIBLE RESETTLEMENT OF
IRAQI-ARMENIANS

REF: A) STATE 95335 B) GENEVA 1787

Classified By: Steve Banks, Pol/Econ chief, reasons 1.4 (b,d)

¶1. (C) Emboffs informally sounded out MFA International Organizations Director, Dziunik Aghajanian, July 11 about Armenia's attitude toward the possibility of resettling Iraqi-Armenians in Armenia, as mentioned ref A. We noted our understanding that the UNHCR was in preliminary discussions about this possibility with U.S. counterparts.

¶2. (C) Aghajanian's response made clear that the GOAM has already given this idea some thought. She said Armenia is very willing, in principle, to accept ethnic Armenians from Iraq for resettlement, but would need significant financial assistance in order to be able to do so. For example, Armenia had no ready supply of adequate housing available to accommodate resettled refugees, though some abandoned former-Azerbaijani (pre-NK war) villages in Armenia could be made ready to accommodate refugees. She also predicted that training and integration assistance (for example, microcredit programs) would be required, to supply refugees with a means to secure their livelihood. She observed that many Iraqi-Armenians were highly skilled and educated, but noted that for employment at the white-collar/professional level many Armenian employers expected applicants to be fluent in both Russian and Armenian. Naturally, few Iraqi-Armenians speak Russian, and their dialect of Armenian differs somewhat from that spoken here. Agahjanian also said Armenia did not wish to be a point of only temporary refuge for Iraqi-Armenians. The GOAM was only interested in resettling refugees who desire to make Armenia their permanent home.

¶3. (C) WHAT ABOUT AN IRAN SCENARIO?: Aghajanian raised her concerns about instability arising from any possible U.S assault upon Iran, which has a much larger Armenian diaspora population than Iraq. She forecast major disruptions for Armenia if such an outcome came to pass, including masses of Iranian-Armenian refugees streaming into Armenia, for which the GOAM would be completely unprepared. We agreed that any such contingency would be difficult for Armenia, and shared the hope that no such scenario would ever come to pass.
PERINA